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drawings in which Mr. Farrer has pointed the way to others who would learn to paint nature. The "Pumpkin Vine," 133, is an old friend, one of those photographed for the series of photographs issued by the management of this journal. It was described in a former number of the *NEW PATH*. The "Dandelion" is a better drawing still, and should also be photographed, that copies may be sold at a low price.

GIRL FEEDING CHICKENS, No. 76, THE GLOOMY PATH, No. 125, A LOST MIND, No. 601—ELIHU VEDDER.

Mr. Vedder has eight pictures in this exhibition, every one of them of interest, all but one, in our judgment, better than his much praised picture last year, "The Lair of the Sea Serpent." It will be well for every one who is interested in the possibilities of American art, and its probable future, to look long and thoughtfully at each. We propose to consider them one by one, but of necessity in the fewest possible words, before speaking at all in general terms of his works.

No. 76 is the first, following the order of the catalogue, and one of the best. Noticeable, first of all, is the singular realism of conception. Realism of conception is often but another expression for sympathy. It is so in this case. And his sympathy has guided the painter aright, making him paint reality in a real way, simplicity in a simple way, and all without affectation or apparent self-consciousness. This little girl is not quite pretty, nor is she at all graceful in her attitude, according to academic laws of gracefulness, nor is her dress picturesque; yet is she the best little girl, save one, in all this exhibition. For real little girls are human, which painted ones less often are; and this child is as near reality, and as human, as painted children are, anywhere out of the work of Edward Frère. We say as real and

as human—not altogether as good. Mr. Johnson's little girl is better, and nearer perfection, because equally real and human, and of a higher order of humanity. Mr. Furness's portrait of a young lady is higher and better art than either, because of a higher order of humanity still, and still as real, still as human as either. But we choose sometimes the pathos there is in poor little bare-foot girls feeding chickens, not showing much intellect, only interest in the chickens, not affording very beautiful subjects, only interesting subjects that we stop to look at every time we pass.

We shall have more to say of this picture in comparing it with others.

Here in "The Gloomy Path"—125—a monk muffled close in gown, and with hood drawn over his head, walks away from us through a dreary country enough, his brown gown blown about by the wind. Well, we do not know much about monks here, and care for them even less. It is not saying much, to say, that we should know and care more if they often were truthfully represented, as Mr. Longfellow and Mr. Browning and Mr. Vedder have done once and again.

This is only a sketch, but there is loneliness in it, and degradation, and frowzy discomfort—modern monkery, in other words. If Mr. Vedder should read this, perhaps he will disclaim having meant so much, and protest that it is the observer's imagination that invests the picture with thought not his own. It may be so; but it is the province of sketches like this, to excite imagination in the observer which a more crowded picture would not. And if he, or any one, say that it is pleasing only to one who knew about monks before, that also may be so, and rightly, it is to them that Mr. Vedder speaks the most forcibly, as did Mr. Longfellow and Mr. Browning. It is for these previously-in-

formed ones to point out to the less informed the excellence of all these portraits.

The "Fort near Cadiz, Spain"—292—has been painted for the sake of the bright sunlit white walls and golden and red flag against a black and stormy sky. Evidently a reminiscence of fact.

The line of coast—a difficult thing to draw—is well drawn. The boats, high up on the beach, surely not more difficult, are very badly drawn. The artist should realize how much he injures his picture by such a fault. A word is needed on this matter. Here is a picture of medium size, which will cost somebody, perhaps four hundred dollars, for Mr. Vedder's pictures sell well. It contains one single idea—brightness against gloom; a beautiful idea, and one that nature never wearies of, but still only one. It is extravagance to buy such pictures. It is extravagance to paint them. The same length of time would have sufficed to paint a picture with two or three ideas; the same money would buy it. We should say to the would-be buyer of a "Vedder," "Don't take this, it will not last six months; take one that you will not weary of—take the 'Girl and Chickens.'" Now, it would have added to the value of the picture if these had been actual portraits of Cadiz boats. These lay-figures on the beach are nothing, not boats at all. They look mere pieces of painted plank.

"The Arab Slave," No. 583, "Jane Jackson, formerly a Slave, Drawing in Oil-Color," No. 589—two life-size heads in circles, are both hung too high, and the unfortunate staining of the wall has brought the pine boards to the color of the Arab slave's face. But how good these two heads are, and how powerful! Jane Jackson is our favorite, partly because we know her better than the Arab, but mainly because the head itself is won-

derfully fine, full of expression and full of truth.

A cedar-tree, somewhere on the sea-coast, very much abused by the sea-winds, has been partly broken down at last, and forced against a great rock. It has plenty of life, and flourishes under the untoward circumstances. The picture "The Lonely Spring"—597—seems to be a portrait, and is, no doubt a faithful one of the tree, at least, whether the landscape beyond is so or not.

It seems that Mr. Vedder dislikes to paint minute details. The life and struggling against difficulty of the tree are seized and quickly and strongly painted; but the tree itself is not painted. It is a sort of caricature; by which we mean that one quality is taken and alone represented, all other truths being suppressed. If one were to see the tree in question through a mist or in imperfect light, he might well see all that Mr. Vedder gives us. He would enjoy it, but would be glad to return the next morning to see it by full daylight. Seeing it so, he would see delicate tracery of foliage, subtle and almost untraceable intermingling of little verdant spikes, little changing lights and shadows—all beautiful, all necessary to the whole truth of the tree, but none of them in this picture. Now, let the painter observe this; the men who can give detail, now, are few, the men who can give general effect are few, the men who can give both are almost unknown. There are two or three who do it now and then. Therefore we praise his success in getting truth of general effect, and appreciate his evident sympathy with the tree. But this is not good tree painting; and we hold it wrong to exhibit such inadequate work. This is not a study, but was painted from a study. Men who can paint well ought not to paint slightly and insufficiently. We do not ask Mr. Vedder to paint landscape, but we ask that he shall paint as

well as he can what he paints at all. The same insufficient work is very observable in other pictures, especially in our beloved No. 76—the “Girl Feeding Chickens;” but is nowhere more injurious than in the picture before us.

No. 601, “A Lost Mind,” is a powerful picture, and deservedly attracts much attention, but seems to be not rightly understood by many of those who look at it long and feel its power. Many intelligent people feel, as they feel when reading “Instans Tyrannus” or parts of “Sordello,” that it is fine, but they hardly know why, and hardly understand what is meant. It is a fault in a work of art to be too obscure; it does not necessarily argue want of meaning, but it does argue an imperfect clearness of conception. Concerning “Sordello” a wise friend once wrote—“It misses one of the aims of art, which is, to be intelligible to the intelligent.” And without hesitation we assert it to be Mr. Vedder’s fault that many who would understand do not more clearly understand what he has meant to say to them.

Our own understanding of it may be briefly stated. The title means not that the woman has lost her mind, but that the mind is as a person is who has lost the right road. The mind is gone astray from peace and truth, as a sinner is gone astray, when he or she also is said to be “lost”—a lost sheep which only one Shepherd can find. The woman’s mind is lost to usefulness—lost to thought; the world seems gray and gloomy to its sight; it sees nothing but sterility and discomfort, is scarcely conscious, indeed, of anything but itself—walking so in the gloomy ways of life, stumbling over obstacles of its own placing, shadows of arid cloud going with it and shutting out the sun—a lost mind knows not its own needs and seeks not its own safety, hoping nothing from the world, where all seems as sad without as within.

A handsome and stately woman, with loose and straggling locks of golden hair escaping in front—she wears a brown robe, a white long scarf passed over her head and knotted in front, and a heavy gray cloak over this. This is probably not the costume of any age or country, but devised by the painter, who wanted a dress at once picturesque and solemn, with heavy fall of drapery and gloomy color. The landscape is a sort of hollow, perhaps the sunken bed of a dry lake; in the distance are steep banks of clay with sand drifted against them and into their crevices—the flat land around is sand, out of which appear rounded masses of soft volcanic rock. Dry yellow grass grows all about in crevices. Hot mid-day sun seems to glow upon the more distant landscape; but near at hand the brilliancy of the light is softened; the foreground is not in full sunlight; the shadow cast by the woman’s figure has neither edge nor form.

The landscape powerfully helps the one central idea of the picture—reckless grief. According to Mr. Vedder’s standard it is good. Every beholder feels sadder for it.

If there is room in a picture for only one idea, this picture is very good. To us, believing that such a picture, painted by so able a man, should contain many harmonious ideas, it is only very clever.

CHRISTMAS TIME, No. 376 — EASTMAN JOHNSON.

We do not know if it was with a purpose that the Hanging Committee placed directly opposite one another two pictures so strongly contrasted as Eastman Johnson’s “Christmas-Time,” and Kraus’s “Chess-Players,” No. 335. Perhaps it is best to think that they do nothing with a purpose; we shall then be able to exercise charity with regard to their not infrequent blunders, and to admire the occasional happy accidents.